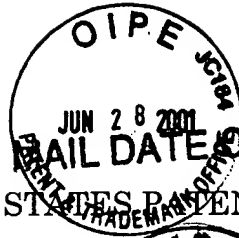


D. Lawrence  
#6/a  
7.11.01



PATENT  
39D-1884 (81841.0019)

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of:

George K. Shibata, *et al.*

Serial No: 09/335,363 ✓

Filed: June 17, 1999

For: SAMPLE LOADING AND  
HANDLING INTERFACE TO  
MULTIPLE CHEMISTRY  
ANALYZERS

Art Unit: 1743

Examiner: P. Bex

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to:

Commissioner for Patents  
Washington D.C. 20231, on

June 26, 2001

Date of Deposit

Wei-Ning Yang, Reg. No. 38,690

Name

Signature

6/26/01

Date

AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

RECEIVED  
JUN 10 2001  
TC 1700

In response to the Office Action dated April 16, 2001, please amend the above-referenced application as follows:

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the text of the second paragraph on page 11, lines 8-19, with the following text:

Whether in accessing sample tubes from the STAT locations or from the many other sample tube locations within the illustrated four trays 32, sample tubes 34 are accessed using the gripper 40 of an overhead carriage assembly 42. The gripper 40 includes opposing arms that can be brought together to grip and lift successive sample tubes from the trays 32. Sample tubes are successively picked up from the sample trays 32 and transported to the sample tube identification station. Figure 2 shows a primary sample tube 44 positioned in the sample tube identification station. Identification information is first read off of the tubes, preferably using a tube spinner and an associated bar code reader, and then aliquots are drawn from the sample tubes in accordance with the testing protocol

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